

Baltimore, Nov 25<sup>th</sup> 1846

1846  
My Dear Madam: Your letter of the 12<sup>th</sup> is  
before <sup>me</sup> and claiming <sup>reply</sup> of it. It has long been my intention  
to write to you, feeling that I ought  
to render you some account of the  
applications of the funds you were  
so kind to send me, to be used in  
the spread of anti-slavery truth.  
Allow me to assure you  
that I consider that the money has  
been well expended. It enabled me  
to issue a larger edition of the  
last document I published, viz:  
"Slavery in Maryland" originally published  
in the columns of the "Saturday Visitor",  
than I otherwise could have  
issued. Part of the edition, has  
been already distributed to advantage,  
and the residue I am holding  
in reserve for distribution among  
the members of our next legislature  
— for, believe me, it is my



determination not to let them alone, whether they let me alone, or not. I think that, aided and encouraged by the growth of anti-slavery sentiment, I may ~~count~~ <sup>rely</sup> on considerably more respect than was shown to my enterprise last winter. Any how, I am resolved to embrace the opportunities presented by their session, for such salutary agitation as circumstances seem to demand.

If I can raise the means - or rather spare it <sup>from</sup> my ~~other~~ paper, it is my intention also to issue an edition of the celebrated speech delivered in the Legislature, by the late celebrated William Pinckney, for distribution among his successors. I see several other ways opening for useful agitation, if the means were only available. But "That's the rub."

I am wandering, and have forgotten to conclude my report of my "Stewardship." The donations you were so kind as to send, aided me to do good in another way. I purchased, some months ago, the subscription list of a paper called "The Ray & Literary Offering" amounting to about 700 names.



(3)

Many of these are slave-holders and  
pro-slavery men in their feelings—especially  
those scattered throughout the interior  
of the state. I was enabled by your  
funds, to continue the Visitor to such,  
all along—at least as long as they  
were willing to receive it—contrary  
to my "cash rule"—for it may not  
be known to you that, with a few  
accessible cases in the cities and else  
where, I stop all papers sent  
out of Baltimore. You will say they  
ought not to have been done—so  
say I; but, however desirable to  
keep the paper in the hands of ~~such~~  
especially slaveholding people, I could  
do no better, and had therefore  
to succumb to the pressure of my  
circumstances. Were the friends of  
Reform to do their duty, papers  
of the Visitor's class would be pur-  
posely left in the hands of ~~the~~ Slave  
holders, just so long as there seemed  
the least chance of getting the  
page ultimately. Do you not agree  
with me?



(4)  
The friends of Anti-slavery in the North  
are no doubt, many of them lamenting  
the fall of the "True American", an  
event for which a want of support  
was assigned. Now feeling that I can  
speak freely with you, let me say  
to you: Don't be surprised, if you  
hear of the ~~discontinuation~~ discontinuance  
of another anti-slavery paper - the  
last one south of Mason's & Dixon's Line  
for want of support. I mean, plainly,  
~~that~~ that it is my resolve to  
<sup>maybe</sup> discontinue the Visitor, <sup>or rather,</sup> (what  
the same thing to the friends of  
freedom) to sell it for what it  
will bring, to the best purchaser  
I can get, if it does not so  
start with the new volume, which  
beginning early in January, as to pay  
better than heretofore. Would you,  
my dear madam, credit the fact that  
~~including~~ the last year was the first  
in which the paper has paid for  
itself, during the five long years  
I have been editing it? It is so -



and my fear is, from the tardiness of  
renewals in the country, and the worse  
than tardiness of collections in towns,  
that it will not continue to pay.  
"What of that?" say you. "Are you  
working solely for the money?" Certainly  
not. But the fact happens to be  
that I have not only sunk all  
of my time (not <sup>at least</sup> estimating my  
reputation) but ~~down~~ two thousand, five  
hundred, dollars, besides! And yet God knows  
my perfect willingness to "struggle  
on" through evil or good report,  
for five years more, for nothing  
as to pay for my time, were I  
sure that I could get out of debt,  
or even if things would get no  
worse with me; but I began to  
feel that I have made my share  
of sacrifices as to money. My  
family have some claim upon my  
little private resources, and ~~that~~ I  
should have more right to spend  
my life than there, provided its  
loss could serve the cause of Truth;



and I have often thought that my premature death would be welcome, with the assurance that I served the cause of Humanity, better than my continued life could do. It sometimes does happen, ~~that~~ so, as the history of "Martyrdom" proves. If my dying breath became the most powerful "editorial" that could be rewritten, I could consent to ~~it~~, I have no doubt — provided I could feel satisfied that those near and dear to me were not left in want. But, oh! a man's wife — one who has self-denied and endured and co-suffered as mine has done — what will he not do for her? When I think of mine, self is utterly lost to view. I feel that I have already asked too much of her!

Now, my dear madam, I am not begging — I could not consent to receive any funds from ~~any~~ quarter, on any other terms than heretofore, viz: to be expended in the spread of truth; but it does seem to me that the friends of anti-slavery in the free states ought not to let the "Voter"



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go down! I know that it has done a  
good service; and I feel every day more  
and more encouraged by the prospects before  
of Reform in this state, as well as  
in my native state, Virginia, from  
which I returned a few days ago.  
All that is wanting is a sustanment  
of our hands, by the friends of Freedom  
in the North. We are too few and  
feeble to stand alone as yet.

Now I write to enquire  
whether something could not be done  
to insure permanency to the Western  
Enterprise, by some mode of increase to  
my list, or advance payments for sub=  
scriptions? It was suggested by a  
friend of the cause, that a certain  
number might be found willing to  
pay for so many copies each, for  
so many years in advance, for distri=  
bution where they would do good.  
I should have no objection to <sup>some</sup> such  
an arrangement - indeed to any one  
that would not require me to either  
sell my feelings <sup>of independence,</sup> or my opinions.  
I must be left untrammelled as to  
the way to carry on the good work in



The sphere allotted to me.

I wish you would see some of the friends, and consult as to what had better be done. I should be very sorry to see the Visitor go into ~~such~~ indifferent hands! If therefore after having waited long enough to see how the subscriptions start on the new volume, it should become necessary to dispose of it, perhaps your committee would like to take it in hand? I have no doubt you could find some competent person to edit it, and with entire safety, if discreetly managed. I leave the subject with you, confiding in you so fully as to believe that you will neither use nor suffer any body else to use the above facts in any public manner whatever. I have communed freely with you, and I feel that my mind has been relieved by so doing.

Wishing you have a "perfect rush" of communications for the "Liberty Bell" for which I ~~am~~ <sup>thank you a short</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>according to your request</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>remain</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>Very truly</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>Yrs</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>J. E. Hodges</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>The Babel</sup> ~~am~~ <sup>Mother</sup>